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IN THE CLAIMS:

1) - 22)      Cancelled

23. (New) A rigid package for tobacco articles; the package (1) comprising a first container (3) having an open end (4), and a lid (5) hinged to the first container (3) to rotate between an open position and a closed position respectively opening and closing the open end (4); when the lid (5) is in the closed position, the first container (3) being substantially parallelepiped-shaped, and comprising two, respectively top and bottom, end walls (7, 8), and a lateral surface bounded by the end walls (7, 8) and comprising two, respectively front and rear, major lateral walls (10, 11), two minor lateral walls (9), four longitudinal edges (12), each defined between a major lateral wall (10; 11) and a minor lateral wall (9), and eight transverse edges (13), each defined between an end wall (7; 8) and a lateral wall (9; 10; 11); the lid (5) being hinged along a hinge (6) formed in the rear major lateral wall (11) and substantially parallel to the longitudinal edges (12), and the lid (5) comprising part of the end walls (7, 8), part of the major lateral walls (10, 11), and a minor lateral wall (9); and the package (1) being characterized by comprising a second container (14) for housing the tobacco articles (2) and which is housed in sliding manner inside the first container (3) to slide, with respect to the first container (3), between an inserted position, in which the second container (14) is fully inserted inside the first container (3), and an extracted position, in which part of the second container (14) is extracted from the first container (3) and projects from the open end (4) of the first container (3).

24. (New) A package as claimed in claim 23 characterized in that, when the lid (5) is in the closed position, at least at the front major lateral wall (10), an edge (31) of the lid (5) is detached from an edge (32) of the first container (3) to partly expose the underlying second container (14).

25. (New) A package as claimed in claim 24 characterized in that, along the front major lateral wall (10) of the first container (3), the edge (31) of the lid (5) is parallel to the edge (32) of the first container (3), so that the distance between the edge (31) of the lid (5) and the edge (32) of the first container (3) is constant.

26. (New) A package as claimed in claim 24 characterized in that, along the front major lateral wall (10) of the first container (3), the distance between the edge (31) of the lid (5) and the edge (32) of the first container (3) varies.

27. (New) A package as claimed in claim 24 characterized in that, when the lid (5) is in the closed position, at the end walls (7, 8), the edge (31) of the lid (5) substantially contacts the edge (32) of the first container (3).

28. (New) A package as claimed in claim 24 characterized in that the edge (31) of the lid (5) and the edge (32) of the first container (3) are defined by a straight line.

29. (New) A package as claimed in claim 24 characterized in that the edge (31) of the lid (5) and the edge (32) of the first container (3) are defined by a bent line.

30. (New) A package as claimed in claim 24 characterized in that the edge (31) of the lid (5) and the edge (32) of the first container (3) are defined by a curved line.

31. (New) A package as claimed in claim 23 characterized in that the second container (14) is substantially parallelepiped-shaped, and comprises two, respectively top and bottom, end walls (15, 16), and a lateral surface bounded by the end walls (15, 16) and comprising two, respectively front and rear, major lateral walls (17), two minor lateral walls (18), four longitudinal edges (19), each defined between a major lateral wall (17) and a minor lateral wall (18), and eight transverse edges (20), each defined between an end wall (15; 16) and a lateral wall (17; 18); the top end wall (15) of the second container (14) comprising an open portion (21) by which to extract the tobacco articles (2) from the second container (14) when the second container (14) is in the extracted position.

32. (New) A package as claimed in claim 31 characterized in that the longitudinal edges (19) of the second container (14) are rounded edges.

33. (New) A package as claimed in claim 32 characterized in that the longitudinal edges (12) of the first container (3) are square edges.

34. (New) A package as claimed in claim 32 characterized in that the longitudinal edges (12) of the first container (3) are rounded edges.

35. (New) A package as claimed in claim 32 characterized in that the second container (14) is formed from a respective flat blank (23) comprising two groups (24) of longitudinal crease lines (25), and a number of transverse crease lines (26) defining, between the two groups (24) of longitudinal crease lines (25), a first panel (15') forming part of the top end wall (15), a second panel (17') forming one major lateral wall (17), a third panel (16') forming the bottom end wall (16), a fourth panel (17') forming the other major lateral wall (17), and a fifth panel (15') forming part of the top end wall (15); the second panel (17') comprising two first wings (18'), which are located on opposite sides of the second panel (17'), are separated from the second panel (17') by the two groups (24) of longitudinal crease lines (25), and form respective portions of the minor lateral walls (18); the fourth panel (17') comprising two second wings (18'), which are located on opposite sides of the fourth panel (17'), are separated from the fourth panel (17') by the two groups (24) of longitudinal crease lines (25), and form respective portions of the minor lateral walls (18); and each group (24) of longitudinal crease lines (25) comprising a number of longitudinal crease lines (25).

36. (New) A package as claimed in claim 23 characterized in that the first container (3) is formed from a respective flat blank (27) comprising two longitudinal crease lines (28), and a number of transverse crease lines (29) defining, between the two longitudinal crease lines (28), a first panel (10') forming part of the front major lateral wall (10), a second panel (9') forming one minor lateral wall (9), a third panel (11') forming the rear major lateral wall (11), a fourth panel (9') forming the other minor lateral wall (9), and a fifth panel (10') forming the rest of the front major lateral wall (10); the first, third and fifth panel (10', 11', 10') having respective pairs of wings (7', 8'), which are located on opposite sides of the first/third/fifth panel (10', 11', 10'), are separated from the first/third/fifth panel (10', 11', 10') by the longitudinal crease lines (28), and form the end walls (7, 8); each wing (7'; 8') of the third panel (11') having two wings (9''), which are located at opposite ends of the wing (7'; 8'), are separated from the wing (7'; 8') by the transverse crease lines (29), and form respective inner portions of the minor lateral walls (9).

37. (New) A package as claimed in claim 31 characterized in that at least one edge (12; 13; 19; 20) of at least one of the containers (3; 14) is a nonsquare edge.

38. (New) A package as claimed in claim 37 characterized in that at least one edge (12; 13; 19; 20) of at least one of the containers (3; 14) is a rounded nonsquare edge.

39. (New) A package as claimed in claim 37 characterized in that at least one edge (12; 13; 19; 20) of at least one of the containers (3; 14) is a bevelled nonsquare edge.

40. (New) A package as claimed in claim 37 characterized in that at least one lateral wall (9; 10; 11; 17; 18) of at least one container (3; 14) has an outwardly convex profile, is connected to at least one relative lateral wall (9; 10; 11; 17; 18) along a sharp longitudinal edge (12; 19), and subtends with the lateral wall (9; 10; 11; 17; 18) a substantially obtuse dihedral angle.

41. (New) A package as claimed in claim 37 characterized in that at least one lateral wall (9; 10; 11; 17; 18) of at least one container (3; 14) has an outwardly convex profile, is connected to at least one relative end wall (7; 8; 15; 16) along a sharp transverse edge (13; 20), and subtends with the end wall (7; 8; 15; 16) a substantially obtuse dihedral angle.

42. (New) A package as claimed in claim 23 characterized in that the minor lateral wall (9) of the first container (3) opposite the lid (5) comprises at least one through hole (22) sized to permit insertion of a user's finger.

43. (New) A package as claimed in claim 23 characterized by comprising stop means for limiting slide of the second container (14) with respect to the first container (3), so as to prevent detachment of the second container (14) from the first container (3).

44. (New) A package as claimed in claim 43 characterized in that the stop means comprise at least one first tongue projecting outwards of the second container (14) from a respective major lateral wall (17) of the second container (14), and a second tongue projecting inwards of the first container (3) from a respective major lateral wall (10; 11) of the first container (3) and located close to the open end (4) of the first container (3); the first and second tongue being so located that the first tongue engages the second tongue as the second container (14) slides out of the first container (3).